



FOFA Gallery

Lan "Florence" Yee

*What Academia Has
Done to Me*

Main Gallery Space
+
Ste-Catherine Vitrine

April 24th – June 2nd 2023

Vernissage
April 27th, 5-7 pm

Monday to Friday
11 am to 6 pm

Tiohtià:ke / Montreal
1515 St-Catherine West,
H3G 2W1, EV 1-715
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Institutional language creates the illusion of collectivity — deploying words like community, diaspora, resilience and care to name entities and processes that its logic of power cannot entirely capture. Lan "Florence" Yee often finds themselves stuck between tokenism and exclusion, confronting scarcity, as well as raced and gendered expectations of labour.

Beginning with the question, "what do we lose when we describe ourselves?" Lan's work often embodies the anxieties that come with identification. Comprising primarily text-based interventions, each work foregrounds variations of self-doubt that acknowledge their complicity in the systems they are attempting to critique.

These anxieties find expression in prolonged and repetitive gestures—meticulously sewing words into fabric, teasing out their poetic absurdities, leaving the raw edges of each page to be felt. They invite you to inhabit these anxieties with them, to feel the heft of each word in the ridges of the embroidery. This is a collective exercise in sitting with discomfort, confronting the futility of symbolic gestures, and abandoning the expectation that artistic labour can remake the world.

Accompanying the exhibition is Kind of a Collective, a six-week knowledge-sharing project tackling issues of creative labour, sustainability, boundaries, funding, led by artists, curators, and cultural workers. This program functions as a complementary antithesis to the anxieties and questions asked by the show's artwork. It distills lofty aspirations of social transformation into smaller, quieter gestures and ways of relating, grounded in more immediate realities, that may ultimately stay with us longer.

- Written by Vince Rozario, curator

Lan "Florence" Yee is a visual artist and serial collaborator based in Tkaronto/Toronto and Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/Montreal. They collect text in underappreciated places and ferment it until it is too suspicious to ignore. Lan's work has been exhibited at the Darling Foundry (2022), the Toronto Museum of Contemporary Art (2021), the Art Gallery of Ontario (2020), the Textile Museum of Canada (2020), and the Gardiner Museum (2019), among others. Along with Arezu Salamzadeh, they co-founded the Chinatown Biennial in 2020. They obtained a BFA from Concordia University and an MFA from OCAD U.



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